AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-40 without prejudice.

1.-40. (Cancelled)

Please add new claims 41-65 as follows:

41. (New) An intervertebral prosthetic joint, comprising:

a first bearing surface adapted to engage a first vertebra;

a second bearing surface adapted to engage a second vertebra; and

a flange projecting from at least one of said bearing surfaces, said flange having a length extending along said at least one bearing surface and a width tapering in a direction along at least a portion of said length.

42. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 41, wherein said tapering width of said flange facilitates wedging engagement of said flange within a preformed opening defined in a corresponding one of the first and second vertebrae.

43. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 42, wherein said flange has a leading insertion end defining a beveled edge to facilitate insertion of said flange into said preformed opening.

44. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 41, wherein said flange has a leading insertion end and a trailing end, said width tapering outwardly from said leading end toward said trailing end.

45. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 41, further comprising a bone-growth promoting substance to facilitate bone growth with said flange.

46. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 45, wherein said flange is coated with said bone-growth promoting substance to facilitate bone on-growth.

47. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 41, wherein said flange defines at least one opening extending therethrough to permit bone through-growth.

48. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 41, wherein at least one of said flange projects from each of said first and second bearing surfaces.

49. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 41, further comprising a first articular surface arranged generally opposite said first bearing surface and a second articular surface arranged generally opposite said second bearing surface, said first and second articular surfaces cooperating to provide articulating motion.

50. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 49, wherein at least one of said first and second articular surfaces includes at least one surface depression configured to facilitate removal of matter disposed between abutting portions of said first and second articular surfaces.

51. (New) An intervertebral prosthetic joint, comprising:

a first bearing surface adapted to engage a first vertebra;

a second bearing surface adapted to engage a second vertebra; and

a flange projecting from at least one of said bearing surfaces and defining at least one opening extending at least partially therethrough to permit bone growth into said flange.

52. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 51, wherein said flange defines a plurality of said at least one opening.

53. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 51, wherein said at least one opening extends through said flange to permit bone through-growth.

54. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 51, wherein said flange is coated with a bone-growth promoting substance to facilitate bone on-growth.

55. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 54, wherein said bone-growth promoting substance comprises a hydroxyapatite.

56. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 51, further comprising a bone-growth promoting substance to facilitate bone growth into said at least one opening of said flange.

57. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 51, wherein said flange

includes a roughened surface to facilitate bone on-growth.

58. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 51, wherein at least one of said flange projects from each of said first and second bearing surfaces.

59. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 51, further comprising a first articular surface arranged generally opposite said first bearing surface and a second articular surface arranged generally opposite said second bearing surface, said first and second articular surfaces cooperating to provide articulating motion.

60. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 59, wherein at least one of said first and second articular surfaces includes at least one surface depression configured to facilitate removal of matter disposed between abutting portions of said first and second articular surfaces.

61. (New) An intervertebral prosthetic joint, comprising:

a first bearing surface adapted to engage a first vertebra;

a first flange projecting from said first bearing surface;

a second bearing surface adapted to engage a second vertebra;

a second flange projecting from said second bearing surface; and

wherein each of said first and second flanges has a tapering width and defines at least one opening extending at least partially therethrough to permit bone growth into said flange.

62. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 61, wherein each of said first and second flanges has a length extending along said at least one bearing surface, said width tapering in a direction along at least a portion of said length.

63. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 61, wherein said at least one opening extends through said first and second flanges to permit bone through-growth.

64. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 61, further comprising a bone-growth promoting substance to facilitate bone growth with said flange.

65. (New) The intervertebral prosthetic joint of claim 61, further comprising a first articular surface arranged generally opposite said first bearing surface and a second articular surface arranged generally opposite said second bearing surface, said first and second articular surfaces cooperating to provide articulating motion, at least one of said first and second articular surfaces including at least one surface depression configured to facilitate removal of matter disposed between abutting portions of said first and second articular surfaces.